

Conroy, Peter

From: Michael Harrison <Michael.Harrison@architectus.com.au>
Sent: Sunday, 28 August 2016 1:00 PM
To: Shankie-Williams, Norma; Arnott, Ian; Conroy, Peter
Cc: Camille Lattouf
Subject: Re: Channel 9 site

Following more detailed examination of the current proposal, this email is a preliminary summary urban design assessment of the S75W Modification Application for 6-30 Artarmon Rd, Willoughby

The facts are

- site area is 3ha
- good public transport nearby e.g. M40 bus 2 stops from Central Sydney
- Court mediated approval 400 dwellings, 1.2:1 FSR, 8 storeys max,
- Council recommended 5.3.14 - 350 dwellings, 1.29:1 FSR, 8 storeys max
- Proposed Modification - 510 dwellings, 1.5:1 FSR, 3 buildings at 9, 11, 12 storeys

The benefits of the modification

- 28% increase in public accessible open space
- \$4million to traffic intersection improvements
- net improvement in overshadowing
- better internal open space linked to bush land to south and aligned with Edward St
- better building layout

Issues

- additional removal of 3 high value trees
- height above 8 storeys
- diversity of housing
- roundabout
- dwellings below ground level facing Artarmon Rd

Urban design assessment

- Generally the modification is a vast improvement on the approved scheme in terms of layout, interface with surroundings and open space connectivity.
- the higher 3 buildings have a relatively small floorplate area and are supported
- the removal of the 3 high value trees is compensated by the 35 being retained
- the approved scheme had townhouses facing west which provided housing diversity on the site.
- the need for the roundabout is questioned because roundabouts are not preferred for pedestrian amenity and safety
- the dwellings below ground level facing Artarmon St are inappropriate for occupant amenity and interface with the street
- the indicative architectural design shows variety in design among the buildings which is appropriate

Recommendations

1. Acknowledge the Modification is a considerable improvement on the approved scheme
2. Either allow the Artarmon St frontage to be raised by one storey so that there are no below street level dwellings facing the street OR require the ground level apartments to be through apartments. The former is preferred.
3. Accept the additional tree removal in compensation for the increased public accessible open space
4. Re-examine the need for the roundabout with the preference being for it to be deleted
5. Require ground level and first floor apartments facing the street to be in the form of townhouses with their front doors accessed from the street frontage and provide private courtyards associated with each townhouse. This is to provide housing diversity and encourage family living.

6. Require CHROFI architects to be retained through to construction and can only be replaced with the consent of Council. This is to ensure design excellence.

7. Accept the proposed building heights because the site is large enough to create its own amenity, the additional heights will be difficult to see from surrounding local streets, the building floorplates are relatively small and so will not be bulky, the site is close to public transport for density optimisation and strategically, large sites should contribute to achieving dwelling targets as much as is reasonable.

Conclusion

It is expected that the main issue for Council will be Recommendations 2 and 7 regarding building height and the fact that the site is not within a Centre. Architectus considers that large inner city sites should have their density optimised. The fact is that the additional height of 9, 11 and 12 is modest and away from view of surrounding neighbours due to the size of the site. And that the site is close to a major public transport route being the M40 bus just 2 stops from Central Sydney.

Regards

Michael Harrison

Director Urban Design and Urban Planning M City Plng M Arch (UPenn) FPIA FAIA

Architectus

Level 18 MLC Centre 19 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000

+61 2 8252 8400

0411 708 963

Michael.harrison@architectus.com.au

www.architectus.com.au

Sent from my iPad

> On 26 Aug 2016, at 9:42 PM, Michael Harrison <Michael.Harrison@architectus.com.au> wrote:

>
> I love the scheme!!
>
> I hope Council likes it.
>
> Some background which I had forgotten about. We actually provided advice 12 months ago in a letter to the potential buyer of the site then. We said another master plan should be tested compared to the Court approved plan as we believe that a more central open space that connected with the open space bush land to the south would be better and that a simpler street layout is needed and the street fronting townhouses could be apartment buildings. We considered that some additional height above 8 storeys in the middle of the site would be appropriate but probably not acceptable to Council. We thought an increase of 15% in GFA might be appropriate with a design excellence process - having regard to the extended approval history of the site development.
>
> We have had no contact with the potential buyer who is now the owner since that original advice.
>
> I was pleasantly surprised to open the drawings today from DPEs website and see the changes of the proposed master plan compared to the approved master plan. It is a very skilful design. Even though there are a couple of buildings at about 12 storeys - these are in the middle of the site and are quite small floorplate area. It is a tower size that I think is appropriate on large suburban sites where their scale is mitigated by other buildings nearby.
>
> The architect is Manly architecture firm CHROFI. I know them very well (as I know most of the best architects in Sydney). Architectus is working in association with CHROFI on Harbord Diggers over the last year or so. This may be seen as a conflict of interest - so I declare it. But it also means I know how they work and I can assure Council that their work is excellent. I did not know they were doing this project until today.
>

> I imagine the main issue for Council will be the height of the two tallest buildings. However, I would urge Council to accept the scheme as a whole - it is a very well resolved scheme. If Council wishes to reduce the tallest two buildings by two storeys then that would still work but I think that would be undesirable.

>

> Regards

> Michael Harrison

> Director Urban Design and Urban Planning M City Plng M Arch (UPenn)

> FPIA FAIA

>

> Architectus

> Level 18 MLC Centre 19 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000

> +61 2 8252 8400

> 0411 708 963

> Michael.harrison@architectus.com.au

> www.architectus.com.au

>

> Sent from my iPad

>

Arnott, Ian

From: Michael Harrison <Michael.Harrison@architectus.com.au>
Sent: Monday, 8 August 2016 6:05 PM
To: O'Brien, Craig
Cc: Shankie-Williams, Norma; Arnott, Ian
Subject: RE: Modification request to modify the Concept Approval for 6-30 Artarmon Road, Willoughby (Channel 9 site)

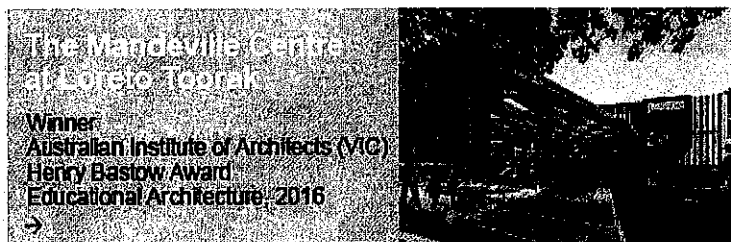
Yes – we have a current consultancy agreement that can include the above project.
Thank you for the link and we will advise shortly.

Regards

Michael Harrison
Director Urban Design and Planning

architectus™

Architectus Sydney
Level 18 MLC Centre 19 Martin Place Sydney NSW 2000
T +61 2 8252 8400 F +61 2 8252 8600 M +61 411 708 963
michael.harrison@architectus.com.au
www.architectus.com.au



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From: O'Brien, Craig [mailto:Craig.Obrien@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au]
Sent: Monday, 8 August 2016 5:08 PM
To: Michael Harrison <Michael.Harrison@architectus.com.au>
Cc: Shankie-Williams, Norma <Norma.Shankie-Williams@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au>; Arnott, Ian <Ian.Arnott@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au>
Subject: Modification request to modify the Concept Approval for 6-30 Artarmon Road, Willoughby (Channel 9 site)

Re: Modification request to modify the Concept Approval for 6-30 Artarmon Road, Willoughby (Channel 9 site)

Hi Michael

It is my understanding that Architectus has been engaged to assist Council regarding a submission on the Channel 9 site Modification application.

Could you please confirm this is your understanding.

Council has been advised by the Department of Planning and Environment that the modification is now on public exhibition.

This modification application seeks to:

- Replace the concept approval layout for 7 building envelopes with heights up to 8 storeys with an amended concept layout for 10 building envelopes with heights up to 12 storeys;
- Increase maximum number of dwellings from 400 to 510 (an additional 110);
- Increase maximum gross floor area from 35,886m² to 45,876m² (an additional 9,990m²);
- Increase public open space through an amended configuration and layout;
- Amend the approved site access and internal road layout;
- Allow for non-residential uses including local retail, office, community or child care uses; and
- Provide new public benefits towards upgrades to the local road network, bushland regeneration and access towards Walter Street Reserve.

The public exhibition period is from Friday 5 August until Monday 5 September 2016.

All documentation regarding the modification application can be accessed from
http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=7631.

Could you please have a look at the documentation.

I will contact you later this week to discuss.

Thank you for your assistance on this matter.

Much appreciated

Craig O'Brien - Strategic Planner
WILLOUGHBY CITY COUNCIL
PO Box 57 Chatswood NSW 2057
P +61 2 9777 7647
E Craig.O'Brien@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au
willoughby.nsw.gov.au | visitchatswood.com.au | theconcourse.com.au



At Home *with* Willoughby
Community Services



Ian Arnott - Planning Manager
WILLOUGHBY CITY COUNCIL
PO Box 57 Chatswood NSW 2057
P +61 2 9777 7646 | M +61 402 712 501
E Ian.Arnott@Willoughby.nsw.gov.au
willoughby.nsw.gov.au | visitchatswood.com.au | theconcourse.com.au



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Community Services



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6-30 Artarmon Rd Willoughby Review

Concept Plan Review



Prepared for Willoughby Council
September 2016

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Introduction 1

1.0 Introduction

Allen Jack + Cottier has been commissioned by Willoughby City Council to review the concept plan (S75W submission) for 6-30 Artarmon Rd, which was originally prepared by CHROFI.

The site is located on Sydney's North Shore and is currently occupied by the Nine Network Australia Television Studios. The Neighbourhoods surrounding the site are typical of the area, which features predominantly low-density residential properties and some high density residential housing to the east. The site is within a short distance of the major arterial roads; Willoughby Road, Artarmon Rd, and the Gore Hill Freeway.

1.1 Study Objective

This study involves a review of the proposed concept plan and associated design principles with particular reference to:

- Urban Design strategies / design drivers
- Open space and site linkages
- Built form principles
- Parking and vehicular access

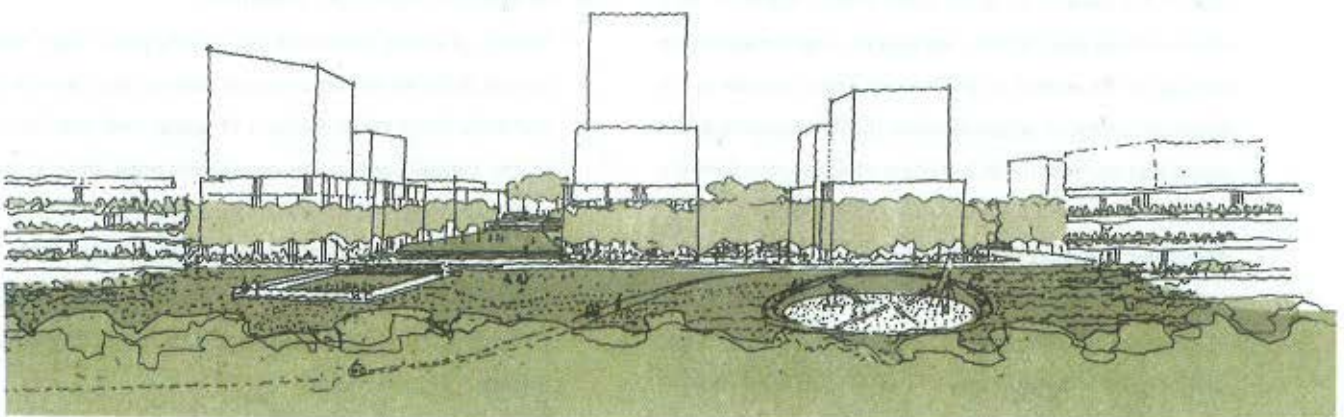
1.2 Background

The site was acquired in August 2015 with an approved Part 3A Concept Plan. The new owner undertook a design-led process that led to a design excellence competition, won by CHROFI. A S75W Modification Application was subsequently prepared by CHROFI to modify the existing concept plan approval by adding an extra 110 to the 400 approved units and increasing the maximum height from 8 to 12 storeys. The resulting FSR increased from 1.20:1 to 1.50:1.

1.3 Study Process

This study is a review of the proposed concept plan and involved the following:

- Telephone briefing followed by review of the following documentation including examination of the urban design and architectural design principles underlying the nature of the proposal.
 - Concept Plan Report (dated 14.07.2016), prepared by CHROFI
 - Council Presentation-Draft (dated 18.03.2016), prepared by CHROFI
 - Traffic Impact Assessment Review (Draft 2), prepared by ARUP
 - Submission to MP10_0198 S.75W Modification 1 (Part 3A) prepared by Willoughby City Council (dated September 2016 - Version 3).
- Review of the proposal against industry best practices for urban design, residential apartment design and public amenity.
- Preparation of this Concept Plan Review Report.



Design Principles and Strategies 2

2.1 Urban Design and Site Strategies

Key design moves

- The proposed modification to the approved concept plan begins with a series of urban design moves that generate the framework for the overall site strategy. Beginning with the identification of views to the distant landmarks, these moves are a well-founded urban design approach.
- The resulting network of public and private spaces is created by the modified street network and re-location of the large open space on the site. On the face of it, this generates more open area than the approved scheme. And even more importantly, allows greater potential for diversity between these spaces.
- Urban design gestures of this nature are important to the success of developments where new levels of density are proposed. They increase permeability for pedestrians on such sites and this generates mutual benefits for the private and public spaces of the urban environment.

Public open space

- The provision of public open spaces with distinct characters (Village Square, Gateway, Village Green, and Village Lawn) in the proposed amendment is a stronger strategic site response than the approved concept plan.
- However, council's clarification of the open space calculation provided by the application correctly identifies that the overall quantum of public open space (hard and soft) has only increased by 9.1% in the proposed concept plan, while the number of units has increased by 27.5%.
- Notwithstanding the overall merits of the the urban design approach, we have identified in this report opportunities to improve the network of public open spaces proposed. As a result of these opportunities, we believe a more proportional increase in the amount of public open space relative to the proposed number of additional units should be provided, and accept that this may result in the loss of some units from the number proposed in the concept plan amendment.
- Willoughby City Council (Council) has noted in its submission that it is concerned that the approved park location and orientation on Artarmon Rd provided a stronger sense of public ownership than the proposed modification. We believe however, that the revised orientation is still capable of achieving this,

and that the landmark view created along Village Green to the south would even enhance it. Furthermore, there are potential noise and safety issues for users in the approved park location, as it has a significant frontage to Artarmon Road and streets bounding all its sides.

- However, the formal style and programme of the proposed Village Green that is indicated in the modified concept plan is generating public space with seemingly similar uses to the Village Lawn provided on the edge of the escarpment. The result is that Village Lawn is the more desirable of the two spaces, and this weakens the Village Green as a key piece of public open space in spite of the key urban gesture, endorsed above, that is driving it.
- Further review of the Village Green's programme and design could provide an opportunity to create a public open space with a more unique character that still respects the urban gesture of a view corridor to the south.
- Although height and scale are discussed below, we also note council's concern for the width of the Village Green being too narrow with regard for the height of the tower forms on each of its side. We disagree that this space needs to be wider. The scale of space provided in the proposed concept allows sufficient room for solar access, a variety of uses, and the provision of the intended view corridor. A further consideration of the programme for the Village Green, as discussed above, will improve the risk of spatial perception that council's Open Space Section has raised.

Site Linkages and Pedestrian Movement

- There is a strong sense that high quality public open spaces can be delivered by the proposed concept plan amendment, but aside from the procession of space from the Gateway to the Village Lawn at the escarpment edge, there is not a corresponding sense of pedestrian site linkages elsewhere on the site. Many of the pedestrian routes between buildings are designed as private gardens with communal paths, and have buildings at little more than complying Apartment Design Guide separations on either side.
- We believe that the proposed concept plan has a potential for

Design Principles and Strategies 2

better site linkages and developing these should begin with a clarification of the differing role and nature of the two main site entry spaces; Gateway and Village Square.

- Considering the gradient of Artarmon Road and the likelihood that Village Square will be the dominant entry point for pedestrians approaching from the east (Willoughby Road), it would appear that the Gateway space could compress, without affecting the urban gesture/view corridor to the south. And there should therefore be a stronger link between Village Square and Gateway along the street and across the site.
- As such, the current position of the basement vehicular entry near the Village Square is constraining the proposed pedestrian route that leads to Buildings B, E and F.

Tree Management

- Council has noted that Tree #32 near the middle of the site was retained in the approved concept plan and we agree with the position that this should be carefully considered for retention in the proposed concept plan.
- Aside from the merit of Tree #32 in its own right, we believe its retention provides an opportunity to address the urban design and site strategies items raised above (ie. its use along a more significant site linkage from Village Square into the site, and the provision of a greater proportion of public open space) and we accept that this may result in the loss of some units from the number proposed in the concept plan amendment.

2.2 Built Form Strategies

Density / Number of Dwellings

- Council has broadly noted opposition to the proposed increase in density/number of dwellings on account of the traffic impacts caused and the limited capacity in Willoughby Road bus services. And has rejected the argument of design excellence for increased density.
- We initially clarify our understanding that although there are requirements in the approved concept plan for design excellence, these are applicable to the future building designs. In the case of the proposed amendment to the concept plan, we understand that the argument of design excellence is offered with regard for the overall site strategy, as well as implied for

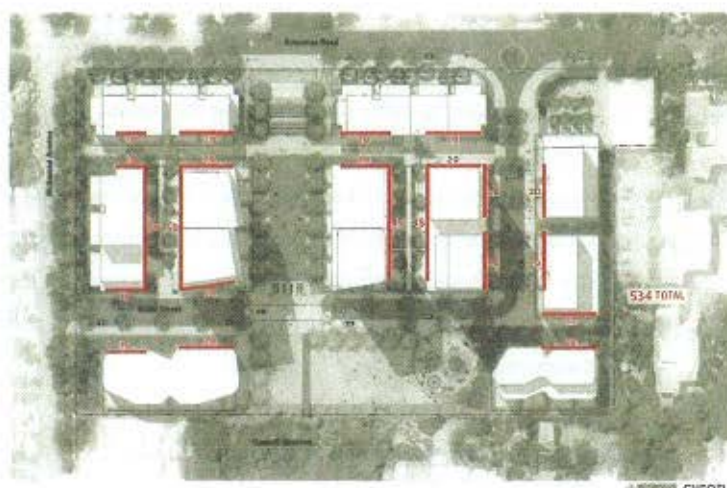
the future building design approvals.

- The taller building forms proposed allow for greater density with a concurrent decrease in site area taken up by roads and an increase in the amount and quality of public open space. Whilst some aforementioned weaknesses exist with the proposed open spaces, the overall site strategy and public benefit created by it in the proposed amendment is a commendable improvement on the approved concept plan.

Height, Solar Access and Visual Bulk/Scale

- We understand the reservations put forward by council with respect to the height of the buildings proposed in the amended concept plan. Namely that they are beyond the existing planning controls of the residential zoning context of the site. However, the proposed concept plan employs a number of strategies to mitigate the perceived impacts of the additional height that we commend.
- The scaling of the built forms contains the highest buildings to the centre of the site, where they have the least impact on the surrounding low density residential context, and avoid any significant change to the overshadowing of neighbouring dwellings caused by the approved concept plan. The design strategy to address the residential scale of Artarmon Road and Richmond Avenue is also an important success of both the approved and proposed concept plans.
- The visual impact study also demonstrates that the taller building forms result in a reduction in visual bulk compared to the approved concept. This improves visual impact from more distant views, including from within the Artarmon Conservation Area.
- The proposed concept plan has demonstrated that the overshadowing impact of Building J on the neighbouring sites along Walter Street is a near neutral impact in comparison to the approved concept plan. However, we note that this is a net impact across a number of properties and whilst the overshadowing by Building J will improve the overshadowing for some, there are some negative impacts for individual properties. In light of the extensive public consultation to date, this demands closer analysis by the applicant to demonstrate an acceptable result has been achieved.

Design Principles and Strategies 2



Building Separation

- The comments above have affirmed our support for the quality of public spaces created by the proposed concept plan. And it is also clear that this has been done with a built form that meets Apartment Design Guide requirements for solar access, privacy, and residential amenity more generally.
- Building separation requirements more specifically, have also been adhered to. However the diagrams above illustrate the general impact that the overall change in density has on the collection of built forms, in a way that goes beyond the minimum requirements of the Apartment Design Guide. The building frontages highlighted in red denote where a building facade is facing another building less than 25m away, in the proposed concept plan on the left and the approved plan on the right.
- Although many of the proposed units face onto the new public spaces and Scott Street, and not into the narrower communal spaces, there is a marked increase from the approved scheme in the length of building forms that face other building forms.
- Whilst the minimum separations have been achieved, we believe the resulting outlook from many units will be of lesser quality. And that more broadly, the collection of built forms in the proposed concept plan will appear too closely spaced when viewed from the new public domain on the site.
- In addition to this, the proposed concept plan is unclear about the potential impact Building J could have on the outlook of the southern building on the adjacent property (Castle Vale Development), and we believe that this should be clarified by the applicant.

- We acknowledge that modification of the building forms to reduce the negative affect of consistently providing minimum building separations may result in the loss of some units from the number proposed in the concept plan ammendment.

Building Articulation

- The approach to articulation and scale of the perimeter building forms that face the existing low scale residential context is successful in the proposed concept plan. However, in light of the above comments about the consideration that is due for the relationship between Village Square and the Gateway, we are concerned that the lowest level of the Artarmon Road facing buildings (Building A and B), may not be an appropriate response in the case of Building B only.
- We suspect the pedestrian route along Artarmon Road at this point may require an approach that creates more privacy for the Building B units that face the street, and the sunken courtyard unit style on the bottom level will result in a minimal amount of public space along the Artarmon Road frontage of this building. We therefore suggest removing the lower level of Building B where it faces the street.
- The distinct character proposed for Buildings H and J is also noted as a successful component of the proposed scheme

2.3 Transport Strategies

Notwithstanding the competency of the assessment provided by ARUP in relation to the traffic and transport issues of the proposed concept plan, we have provided comment below on two items that we believe have an important impact on site and building design strategies in residential development where higher densities are proposed.

Design Principles and Strategies 2

Vehicular Address and Parking Access

- The provision of a single entry/exit point for the subterranean parking of 510 units can prove to be problematic in our experience. The vehicle access point provided is well located on the site, but it limits the sense and understanding of address for residents. The further a resident lives away from the point of entry to the carpark, the greater this effect will be.
- Additionally, this single vehicle access point can lead to congestion within the site carpark at peak times.

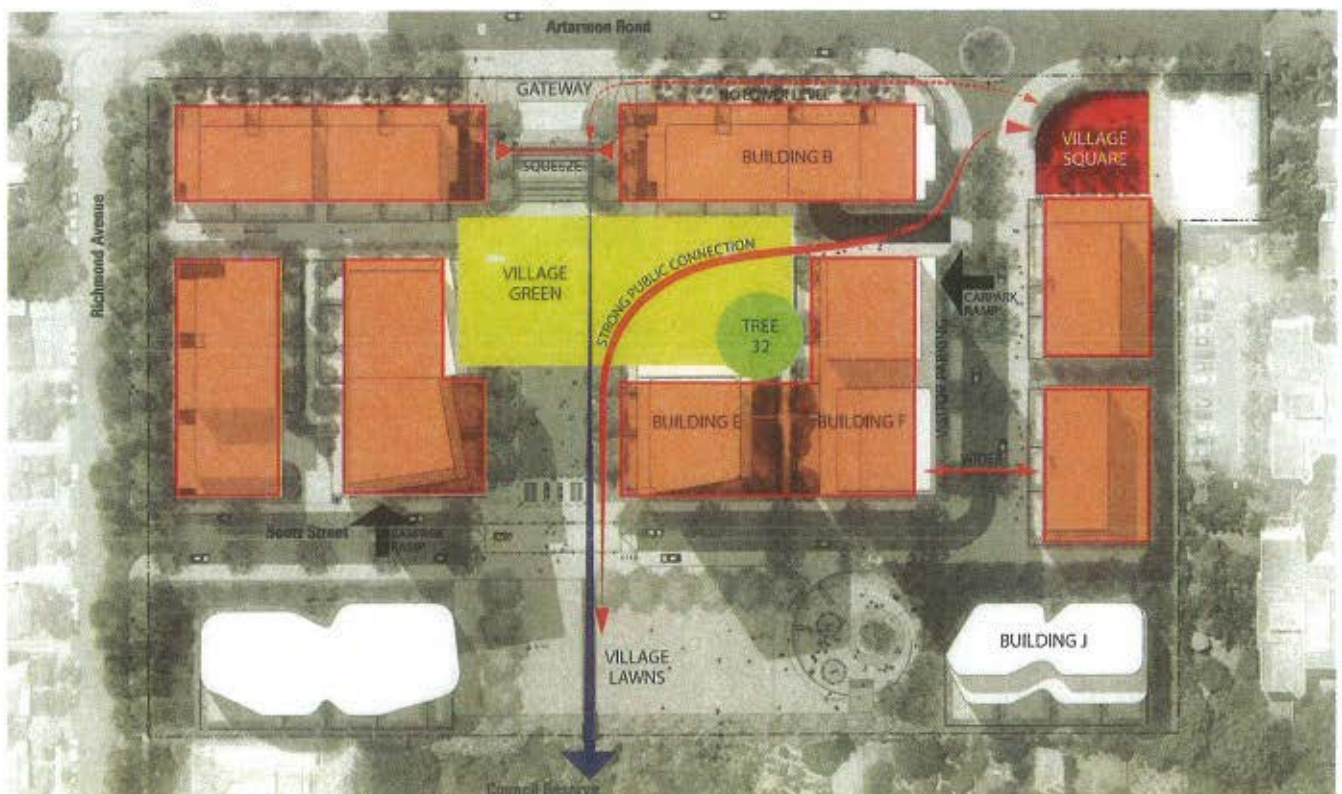
Visitor Parking

- As noted in council's comments and extracts from ARUP's Traffic Impact Assessment there in, kerbside visitor parking is preferable to a basement location. The ability to provide this will be limited by the need to accommodate on-street parking that will be lost from Artarmon Road and Richmond Avenue.

3.1 Conclusions

In light of the concept plan review provided above, ten conclusions are provided here and illustrated generally in the diagram below. We believe that incorporation of these matters into an amended version of the proposed concept plan may require a reduction in the vicinity of 30 apartments to the total number of dwellings in the proposed concept plan.

1. Allen Jack + Cottier believe that additional public open space, more commensurate with the proposed increase in dwelling numbers, should be provided in the proposed concept plan.
2. More careful consideration for the programme/uses of Village Green is required to better inform the design of this public open space so that it creates a more diverse contribution to the public open space and maintains the view corridor identified in the overall site planning strategy.
3. Further assessment of anticipated pedestrian traffic should be used to inform the design strategies of Village Square and the Gateway as the two major pedestrian access points to the site. And by virtue of this, site linkages that improve pedestrian access the rest of the site should be incorporated into the public open space design.
4. Retention of Tree #32 should be considered for its own merits and as an opportunity for it to contribute to improved site linkages and additional public open space.
5. Modification of the proposed forms (Buildings E and F) around Tree #32 and potential site linkages should also be undertaken to reduce the overall length of building frontage provided on the site with minimal separation to other buildings. We believe the length of building facades facing other buildings less than 25m away could be reduced by some 200m.
6. The applicant should be required to demonstrate the relative impacts of Building J on the outlook from units in the adjacent Castle Vale Development and the solar access to the properties along Walter Street.
7. The units facing Artarmon Road on the lowest level of Building B should be removed to improve this building's relationship with the low scale residential context of Artarmon Road.
8. The proposed vehicular entry near Village Square should be moved to conceal it in/under a built form and minimise encroachment on open spaces/site linkages.
9. A second vehicle access point to the subterranean parking that improves the sense of address and traffic impacts in peak times should be provided.
10. The building separation along Scott Street should be widened to allow for a larger provision of kerbside visitor parking.





Office of the
Government
Architect

Brendon Roberts
A/Team Leader
Key Sites Assessments
Department of Planning and Environment
23-33 Bridge Street
Sydney NSW 2000

RE: MP 10_0198 MOD 1

**OFFICE OF GOVERNMENT ARCHITECT RESPONSE - REQUEST TO MODIFY THE CONCEPT
PLAN APPROVAL FOR 6-30 ARTARMON ROAD, WILLOUGHBY (FORMER CHANNEL 9 SITE)**

Background

On 1ST August 2016 the Department of Planning requested the Office of the Government Architect (OGA) provide an independent design review of the modification to the Concept Approval for 6-30 Artarmon Road, Willoughby (former Channel 9 site).

In providing this advice OGA has reviewed the documentation submitted by JBA in July 2016 S75W Modification Application Concept Plan MP10_0198 and undertaken a site visit on the 13th September 2016.

The following commentary is a summary review of the Concept Plan focusing primarily on the design aspects of the plan including urban design, architecture and landscaping.

This commentary has not reviewed other aspects of the plan in any depth, nor have in-depth comparisons been made between previous plans, community consultation or any other specialist reports.

Recommendations are provided indicated in *italics*, that may be used as conditions of consent.

Proposed Modifications

In summary the proposal seeks to modify the Concept Plan Approval as follows:

- Replace the approved residential master plan with the revised CHROFI master plan for 510 dwellings across eight residential flat buildings ranging in height from 4 to 9 storeys, two buildings being up to 11 and 12 storeys and small scale local commercial uses such as cafes;
- Amend the configuration and layout of public open space within the Site, resulting in a 28% increase in area, improved connectivity and additional potential for deep soil planting;
- Include a new public benefit offer that provides \$3 million towards the upgrade of the Willoughby Road/ Artarmon Road/ Small Street intersection and \$1 million contribution toward bushland regeneration and access upgrades to Walter Street Reserve; and
- Provide a simpler internal road network, providing for on-street visitor parking within a new loop road and a new roundabout access point to Artarmon Rd;
- Allow for small-scale non-residential uses such as local retail, office, community or child-care uses to cater to demand generated predominately by the new residential population of the site.

One of the images in the revised concept plan is shown below.



Previous Government Architect Comments (21st June 2013)

In 2013 the Government Architects Office provided comments on the Major Projects Application (DoPI 2013/173).

The previous comments were based on the Concept Plan prepared by SJB and an EAS by JBA.

Since 2013 a new design team; CHOFI, has developed a new concept plan which is the subject of this desktop summary review.

The majority of the previous comments and recommendations have been addressed in the current concept plan, with the exception of the following two issues:

- Height: The previous comments recommended a maximum of 10 storeys. The current scheme indicates 11 and 12 storey buildings located centrally within the site. This is discussed in more detail in *Building Massing and Height*.
- Carpark Entries: The previous comments recommended more, and small carpark entries dispersed across the site. The concept plan indicates one entry and exit. As per previous advice, *it is likely that such a large development would benefit from a number of smaller exits and entries particularly to ease congestion at peak times. Advice should be sought from a traffic engineer for specific recommendations.*

Design Review Summary

Site Planning

Many aspects of the Concept Plan provide improved outcomes for the site and surrounding local area and the design has addressed many of the comments raised previously by GAO.

The following items are of particular note in the new concept plan and should be embedded into subsequent and more detailed planning and design proposals:

- The location, configuration and interconnectedness of open spaces including parks, gardens and streets.
- The intent and positioning of a cliff top reserve park, with district views providing a green 'ridge' extension to Artarmon Reserve and a publicly accessible pedestrian link/bush track to Artarmon Reserve from the new through street.
- The green central open space which provides an extension of the view corridor down Edward Street, opening up an expansive district view to the street and creating a community focal point and outlook for apartments.
- Basement car parking footprints, which sit directly under building footprints and do not extend under open spaces, streets or street setback areas.
- The location of the access street which provides a new public street, linking Artarmon Road to Richmond Avenue.
- The location of small scale retail and commercial premises along Artarmon Road.
- The location of a small urban square on the corner of Artarmon Road and the new street.

- The design of smaller footprint buildings, resulting in the potential for better internal amenity, opportunities for more garden apartments and shorter wall lengths along streets.

Comments

One of the most significant improvements in the concept plan is the structure planning of the site and the location and amount of public domain provided. Under the Concept Plan the system of streets and open spaces is indicated as part of the public domain and is in public ownership.

This is an essential aspect of the plan and should be a key feature of the project going forward. As such, it is important that the configuration, location and size of public spaces is clearly agreed at the Concept Plan stage of the project so that the quality of public space is not compromised as the project goes forward into detailed design development.

It is recommended that a dimensioned plan is provided that defines and articulates the boundaries between private and public space. It should include the location, size, key guidelines and configuration of each space to match the intended programming.

This is to ensure that there is a definitive location for public areas and that buildings and other private areas are not increased in scale or height such that they impinge on the proposed system of public open spaces and streets.

Building Massing and Height

The building massing appears to respond appropriately to the surrounding context with particular note to:

- The general massing arrangement of smaller, more broken up and deeply articulated building forms along both Artarmon Road and Richmond Avenue that provide a transition in scale to detached houses along both street frontages.
- The 4 storey podium datum across the site and vertical articulation of towers which breaks down building bulk and provides a consistent lower, street wall scale around open spaces and along streets.
- The additional height positioned centrally within the site in the form of two narrow footprint towers works well to ameliorate impacts on the surrounding existing residential areas and streets and allows for lower scale buildings along Artarmon Road and Richmond Avenue.
- The concept of three building types. The street buildings and mid-rise towers both appear to be appropriate building types that result in high quality residential amenity and address the urban context.

Comments

The bush build type (buildings H and J) is less successful. These two buildings are not dissimilar to standard slab residential flat buildings. Further solar studies are required to establish whether building J in particular will overshadow, the rear of Walter Street buildings when fully developed under the current zoning, which allows for residential flat buildings. Walter street lots are located

significantly lower level than building J, which results in an overall height of building J, of 2 or more levels above its actual height and Walter Street lots are located to the south of the subject site.

Walter Street is currently in transition from detached dwellings to residential flat buildings up to 4 storeys. The WDCP controls will result in residential flat buildings with much smaller rear gardens as well as much narrower setbacks than the current houses.

It is important that Building J does not impede the design quality of future residential flat buildings on Walter Street lots, taking into account the significant level change.

It is recommended that further design development is undertaken to refine building J in response to the future medium density context along Walter Street (Recently lodged DA's for Walter street lots are now available from Willoughby Council) including:

- *the orientation of apartments to the east and west, with less apartments looking down into Walter Street lots,*
- *deeper setbacks to the rear boundary,*
- *a smaller building footprint or a different building type , rather than an east-west oriented slab building.*

The position of buildings G is much close to the side boundary than the previous scheme resulting in a reduced setback by as much as 18m less. It appears that the majority of dwellings in the neighbouring buildings are oriented to the east, north and south rather than towards the subject site. Therefore this is not likely to be an issue.

Additional Built Form

The increase in the number of apartments is around 27.5% above the previous scheme and the increase in height in the order of 1 to 4 storeys. The FSR increase is from 1.2: to 1.50:1 representing a 25% increase.

This increase in density appears to have been achieved through some additional height in the tower buildings and by providing a 'sunken floor' on buildings A, B, C.

The additional height, number of apartments and FSR combine to result in a significant departure from the approved scheme and the previous PAC and LEC determinations in 2014.

Careful consideration and evaluation should occur to ensure that any approved increase manages impacts on public space, open space, neighbouring sites and streets..

Comments

'Sunken' level

The generic section of the 'sunken' design and imagery provided in the Concept Plan documentation is unconventional; although not necessarily problematic if well designed.

The drawings indicate that the 'sunken' apartments have a 6m wide sunken garden area. This dimension is required to be documented in the concept plan to ensure the garden spaces do not get

reduced in width during the design development phase, such that apartment amenity is compromised.

The intended level change has not been demonstrated to be coordinated with pedestrian and vehicular circulation, privacy and the functionality of ground level external public, communal and private spaces. Creating a significant level change in the form of retaining walls around building boundaries creates an additional level of design complexity that must be resolved.

Given the significant natural and man-made topographic changes across the site, it may be appropriate for parts of the buildings frontages to be sunken, however key frontages such as those along the central park may not result in a quality park edge if sunken below the park level.

It is recommended that the 'sunken' level is further explored, dimensioned and detailed to ensure that the generic section provided in the Concept Plan documentation functions across all building edge conditions, topographic conditions and various transitional/sectional arrangements between public space, communal space, private open space and dwelling interiors as well as common circulation routes into buildings and vehicular entries. This study should determine typical and maximum depths of the sunken level across the site.

Access to services and Public Transport

Further investigation into how the increase in population will be accommodated with regard to access to essential services should be undertaken to ensure that public transport options match demand and the increase in built form is accompanied by public transport initiatives such as a bus service linking the community to trains and services.

Ground Plane

There is limited information in the concept plan regarding how the buildings are resolved at ground level in section.

This is important as the significant topographic variations (both natural and man-made) across the site combined with the 'sunken floor' level and the variety of open spaces may result in disconnection between interior and external spaces, circuitous circulation routes and ramps for pedestrian and vehicles.

The quality of the public domain and open spaces; including parks, streets and communal areas will be influenced by the interface design of buildings at ground level

It is recommended that more design detail is provided on:

- *The interface between (street section) ground level apartments and streets, parks and other exterior spaces.*
- *The resolution of level changes throughout the site on all buildings.*

Resolution of Building Articulation and Materials

The precedent imagery in the Concept Plan includes perspectives of well-articulated buildings that use a palette of complementary materials.

However there is limited detailed design information in the Concept Plan on how each building is resolved in elevation and specific information on materials and detailing. Given the number of buildings and the size and scale of buildings it is desirable that there is more information provided in the Concept Plan as to how variety is to be provided between buildings, how materials and detailing is used to break down the scale of buildings and how the new buildings complement the character of surrounding existing streets and buildings.

It is recommended that additional information is provided on:

- *Articulation of buildings and building elevations,*
- *The intended palette of materials and variety of materials/detailing between buildings.*

Further matter for Considerations

The site is not within walking distance to local services such as a supermarket and there is no train station. There is a bus to Chatswood which requires walking down the steep hill to Willoughby Road and a 20-30 minute bus ride. As such it is expected residents will mainly drive to access essential services, with potential public domain impacts.

Some assessment of pedestrian access and connectivity from the site to essential daily and weekly services ie. such as shopping, entertainment, child care etc. is recommended.

Conditions of Consent

The conditions of consent recommended by OGA are provided under each topic within this review and are identified in *italics*.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Poulet'.

Peter Poulet

Date: 23rd September 2016